

REMARKS

Claims 1-32 and 34-40 are currently pending in the application. All of these claims are currently under rejection. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested for the following reasons.

The specification was objected to as missing a reference number. This has been corrected as requested.

The specification was objected to as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter. Specifically, the Examiner requested that the verbatim terminology "woven in joints form an inflatable portion having more than four interior sides" be added to the specification. Accordingly, it has been added on page 5, line 18. It is noted that support for this language can be found in the figures of the originally filed application, which clearly depict an inflatable portion having more than four interior sides. Therefore, no new matter is being presented. It is believed that this rejection is now obviated.

Claims 1-22, 25 and 36 were rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Specifically, the Examiner stated that Claim 10, line 15, the term "said... internal flow barrier" lacks proper antecedent basis. The term "internal" has been changed to "interior" as proposed by the Examiner to correct the typographical errors. In claims 12 and 25, the requested changes relating to claim dependency to correct antecedent basis have also been implemented, as well as the typographical error in Claim 36. It is believed that these rejections have thus been obviated.

Claims 1-4, 6-13, 15-26, 28-32, and 34-40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Haland et al (GB 2,297,950) in view of Buchner et al. (US 3,792,873) and Thornton et al. (U.S. 5,098,125.) Specifically, the Examiner stated that "Haland et al discloses an airbag cushion comprising a woven fabric

bag having a face portion formed by a first fabric layer, a rear portion formed by a second fabric layer, and woven in joints which define flow barriers between the first and second layers”, and that the “fabric layers are interwoven to form the woven in joints” (referencing Figs. 1 and 6-8 and p. 6, lines 4-15. The Examiner further states that the fabric layers are not connected to one another between the joints, referencing Figs. 7 and 8.

The Examiner acknowledges that Haland et al “lacks fabric layers made of polyester or nylon yarns, and woven in joints separated by at least two yarns and no more than eight yarns.” However, the Examiner states that Buchner et al teaches an airbag cushion having woven in joints defining flow barriers between first and second layers, with the woven in joints being separated by eight yarns, and that Thornton describes an airbag cushion having interwoven fabric layers that can be woven on an “electronic or computer-controlled dobby or harness regulator.” From this, the Examiner concluded that it would have been obvious to make the claimed invention.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are requested for the following reasons. The Haland reference is directed to a shaped airbag having a non-linear side (Claim 1, Figs 1, 2, 4, 6, and 9). As will be readily appreciated by those of ordinary skill in the art, the formation of a woven in curved side, or of joints extending non-perpendicularly to each other (such as those forming conical cells e.g., p. 3, line 3), would require the use of a jacquard loom. As will also be readily appreciated by those of ordinary skill in the art, a jacquard loom enables individual yarn control during weaving as opposed to a dobby loom, which enables only limited fabric complexity. (See Applicant’s specification p. 3-4.) The instant claims are directed to a **non-jacquard** airbag. Haland fails to disclose or suggest such a bag.

The Buchner patent shows a bag formed by joining inflatable tubular fabric sections together to form a structure. As clearly illustrated in Fig. 3 and

described in col. 3, lines 46-51, the woven fabric sections are parallel tubes with no internal complexity, with the chambers running parallel to each other. There is nothing in this patent that discloses or suggests a non-jacquard airbag having the claimed complex shape set forth in the instant application. Furthermore, the Thornton patent is directed to an airbag having a simple rectangular interior rather than an inflatable portion having more than four sides, and lacking flow barriers of the variety claimed in the instant application. Therefore, there is nothing, absent a hindsight reconstruction utilizing Applicant's specification, that would lead one of ordinary skill in the art to produce a **non-jacquard** airbag having a complex structure as set forth in the claims. As described in Applicant's background, the provision of complex shaped bags such as that shown in Haland have heretofore not been achievable without a jacquard loom; the prior art fails to disclose or suggest the claimed invention. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

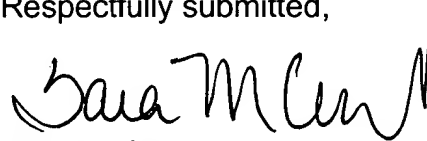
Claims 5, 14 and 27 were rejected on the same grounds, in further view of Kitamura (US 5,336,538). Kitamura likewise fails to disclose or suggest a non-jacquard airbag having the claimed complex shape. Therefore it is maintained that these claims are allowable for the same reasons described above with respect to the independent claims.

CONCLUSION

In light of the above amendments and remarks, applicant submits that the claims are in condition for allowance, and request that the outstanding rejections be withdrawn. If a telephone conference would expedite allowance of the claims, the examiner to telephone Applicants' Attorney at (864) 503-1596.

Applicants believe that an extension of time fee of \$ 950.00 is due, and the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge this amount to Deposit Account No. 04-0500. If the USPTO determines that a further fee is due, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fee to the same account.

Respectfully submitted,



Sara M. Current
Registration No.: 38,057
Phone No.: (864) 503-1596

Milliken & Company
920 Milliken Road, M-495
Spartanburg, SC 29303



REDLINED

WEFT

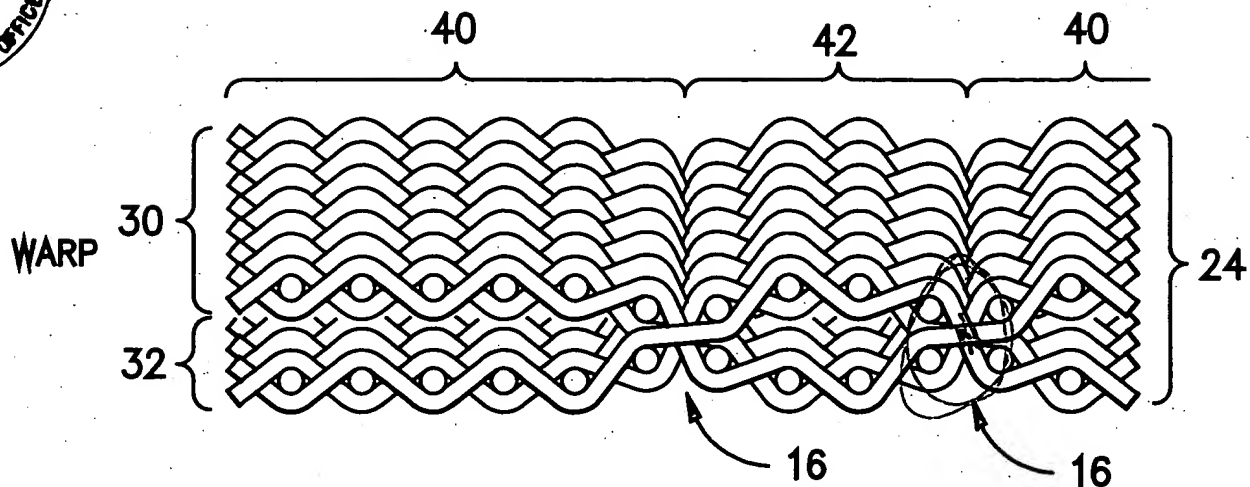


FIG. -5-

WEFT

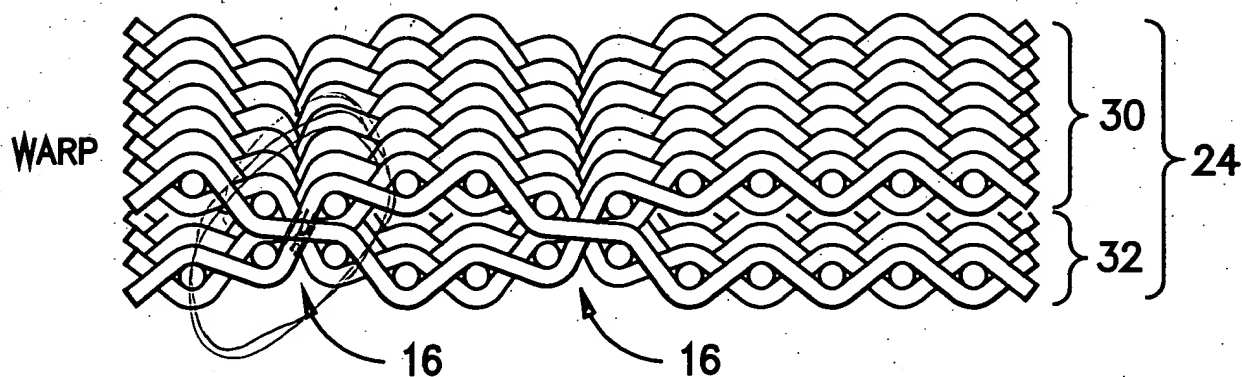


FIG. -6-

REDLINED